



# Peter Symonds College Job Description

**Job title:** Head Chef

**Department:** Catering Services

**Hours:** 37 hours per week – Term time (39 weeks) requiring flexibility to cover weekends, events and boarding service when required.

**Responsible to:** Catering Manager and in the Catering Managers absence the Deputy Catering Manager.

Supervising the Catering Team (circa 20 staff, including 5 chefs, kitchen porters, front of house servers [when completing kitchen duties] & weekend catering casuals)

## Main purpose of the job

The Head Chef is a pivotal leadership role responsible for the day-to-day culinary operation at the college. This includes the strategic planning, development, and execution of high-quality, nutritious, and diverse menus for a large student body (circa 5000-day students), 2 dedicated boarding houses (73 students), college events and growing hospitality offering. The Head Chef will supervise and motivate a team of approximately 20 catering professionals, ensuring operational excellence and unwavering adherence to food safety and hygiene standards. This role is central to enhancing the student experience through exceptional food provision.

## Main duties and key responsibilities

The following is typical of the duties and responsibilities of the post holder. It is not exhaustive and other duties and responsibilities appropriate to the post may be required by the College.

### I. Culinary Leadership & Menu Development

- **Strategic Menu Planning:** Collaborate with the catering manager to develop, implement, and continuously evolve innovative, exciting, and balanced menus that cater to the diverse tastes, dietary requirements (including allergies, intolerances, cultural, and ethical choices), and nutritional needs of 16–19-year-old students and staff. This includes distinct menus for day students, boarding students (breakfast, lunch, dinner), and special events.
- **Food Quality & Presentation:** Ensure consistently high standards of food preparation, cooking techniques, and artistic presentation across all catering outlets, maximising the use of fresh, seasonal, and locally sourced ingredients where feasible.

- **Trend Integration:** Proactively research and integrate current food trends relevant to the youth demographic, ensuring menus remain engaging, popular, and competitive, whilst maintaining nutritional integrity and cost-effectiveness.
- **Recipe Management:** Ensure a comprehensive recipe database is maintained with accurate portion controls and costings to ensure consistency and profitability.
- **Special Events & Functions:** Ensure the timely delivery of catering for all college events, open days, parents' evenings, and internal/external functions, often outside of regular service hours.

## II. Team Leadership & Management

- **Recruitment & Development:** Assist the catering manager with recruitment, and play a lead role with induction, training, and ongoing professional development of the kitchen team, fostering a culture of continuous improvement and culinary excellence.
- **Performance Management:** Conduct termly performance reviews of the chefs, set objectives, provide constructive feedback, and address any performance issues or disciplinary matters in line with college policy.
- **Motivation & Morale:** Inspire, motivate, and empower the kitchen brigade, promoting a positive, collaborative, and highly efficient working environment where teamwork and pride in work are paramount.
- **Scheduling & Resource Allocation:** Efficiently collaborate with the catering manager to set staff rotas being aware of labour costs, and resource allocation to ensure optimal staffing levels during peak service times and across all catering operations.
- **Communication:** Maintain open and effective communication channels within the kitchen team and with the wider Catering and College management.

## III. Operational & Financial Management

- **Budget & Cost Control:** Exercise stringent portion control to reduce waste, set minimum and maximum inventory levels, and exceed financial targets set by the catering manager.
- **Procurement & Supplier Relations:** Collaborate with the deputy catering manager for all food purchasing, building strong relationships with approved suppliers to ensure competitive pricing, quality ingredients, reliable deliveries, and full traceability.
- **Stock Management:** Complete robust stock control procedures, including accurate ordering, stock rotation (FIFO), storage, and regular stock-takes with the deputy manager to minimise spoilage and waste.
- **Efficiency & Flow:** Optimise kitchen layout and workflow to ensure efficient production and service during high-volume periods, minimising queues and maintaining swift service.
- **Equipment Management:** Oversee the maintenance, cleanliness, and safe operation of all kitchen equipment, identifying needs for repair or replacement reporting all faults to the catering manager and ensuring compliance with manufacturer guidelines.

## IV. Health, Safety & Compliance

- **Food Safety (HACCP):** Monitor and enforce compliance of the comprehensive Food Safety Management System (HACCP) across all catering operations, ensuring full compliance with all relevant legislation and college policies.
- **Hygiene Standards:** Maintain impeccable standards of kitchen hygiene, cleanliness, and sanitation, including completing comprehensive cleaning schedules and regular audits.
- **Health & Safety:** Promote and ensure a safe working environment, conducting regular risk assessment reviews alongside the catering manager, provide staff training, and ensure compliance with all Health & Safety regulations (e.g., COSHH, manual handling).
- **Allergen Management:** Strictly adhere to robust procedures for allergen management, ensuring accurate information, safe handling, and confident service for students, staff and college guests with allergies and intolerances.
- **Audits & Inspections:** Be prepared for and effectively manage internal and external audits with the catering manager (e.g., EHO inspections), demonstrating full compliance.

## V. Stakeholder Engagement & College Ethos

- **Customer Feedback:** Actively seek and respond to feedback from students, boarding staff, teaching staff, and parents to continually improve the catering service and enhance customer satisfaction.
- **Safeguarding:** Prioritise the safeguarding and welfare of all students, participating in relevant training and adhering to college safeguarding policies and procedures.
- **Equality & Diversity:** Champion and contribute to the college's commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion, ensuring non-discriminatory practices in all aspects of catering provision.
- **Interdepartmental Collaboration:** Collaborate effectively with other college departments (e.g., Bursary, Boarding, Events, Student Services) to ensure seamless catering provision and support wider college initiatives.
- Undertake any other duties reasonably required by the Principal.

## Person specification

Criteria	Essential	Desirable	How We Will Assess
<b>Qualifications</b>	<p>Minimum NVQ Level 3 in Professional Cookery / Hospitality &amp; Catering, or equivalent.</p> <p>Intermediate or Advanced Food Hygiene Certificate (Level 3 or 4).</p> <p>Current Health &amp; Safety qualification.</p>	<p>Experience in a college or school environment, particularly one with boarding facilities.</p> <p>Formal leadership and management training.</p> <p>Experience with sustainable catering practices and initiatives.</p>	<p>Application Forms/certificates at interview.</p>
<b>Experience</b>	<p>Proven experience as a Head Chef or Senior Sous Chef in a high-volume catering environment (e.g., large-scale educational institution, corporate catering, hotel, or events venue), ideally catering for 2000+ meals daily.</p> <p>Demonstrable experience of leading, managing, and motivating a large kitchen brigade (circa 15-20 staff).</p> <p>Extensive experience in menu planning, costing, and development for diverse client groups, including specific dietary needs.</p>		<p>Application form//interview/references</p>

	<p>Strong track record of achieving budgetary targets and implementing effective cost control measures.</p> <p>Experience with purchasing systems and supplier management.</p>		
<b>Skills &amp; and Knowledge</b>	<p>Exceptional culinary skills with flair, imagination, and a passion for fresh, high-quality food.</p> <p>Strong leadership, coaching, and team-building abilities.</p> <p>Excellent organisational and time management skills, with the ability to work effectively under pressure and manage multiple priorities.</p> <p>In-depth knowledge of HACCP, food safety regulations, and Health &amp; Safety legislation.</p> <p>Proficient in IT, including catering management software, stock control systems, and Microsoft systems.</p> <p>Excellent communication and</p>		Application form/ interview/references

	<p>interpersonal skills, with the ability to build rapport with staff, students, and stakeholders.</p> <p>A keen eye for detail and commitment to continuous improvement.</p>		
<b>Personal Attributes</b>	<p>A highly motivated, proactive, and results-oriented professional.</p> <p>Resilient and adaptable to the dynamic demands of a college environment.</p> <p>Demonstrates empathy and a genuine interest in the well-being and development of young people.</p> <p>Committed to delivering outstanding customer service.</p> <p>Lives within a reasonable commuting distance of the college.</p>		Application form/ interview/references
<b>Performance Standards will be Judged by</b>	<p>The consistently high quality, creativity, and nutritional value of food and services provided across all catering outlets.</p> <p>The effective control of expenditure against</p>		Application form/ interview/references

	<p>budget, demonstrating value for money.</p> <p>Impeccable standards of hygiene and adherence to all food safety and health &amp; safety regulations.</p> <p>The successful leadership, development, and retention of a high-performing catering team.</p> <p>Positive feedback from students, boarding staff, college staff, and external stakeholders.</p> <p>Proactive engagement in college life and contribution to the overall student experience.</p>		
<b>Other</b>	<p>Display a commitment to the protection and safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.</p> <p>Display a commitment to meeting the individual needs of each student, to respect diversity, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.</p>		