

Job Description



Function:	Technical
Position:	Sous Chef
Job holder:	
Date (in job since):	01/03/2025
Immediate manager (N+1 Job title and name):	Head of Operations
Additional reporting line to:	
Position location:	Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh

We are looking for an experienced Sous Chef who has experience of both a retail café environment as well as plated service to support the refinement and development of spaces at the Royal Botanic Garden. The primary responsibilities of the Sous Chef are to support the Head Chef with the day-to-day operation of the John Hope Gateway Café, Arboretum Suite, Mobile Units and Events food delivery, ensuring that compliance standards are met as well as the creation and innovation of the menus across the site.

This is an exciting role that requires a degree of flair and innovation to continue to drive the sustainability initiatives such as carbon reduction, sustainable eating and working closely with the gardening team on collaboration around the growing plans within the garden and how the produce grown influences menu decision making.

Working closely with the kitchen team, the role will deputise for the Head Chef in their absence and maintain the standards of food offer, compliance and team development. The role will also be responsible for supporting in the management of the kitchen finances ensuring that COS is maintained at 23% or less and a consistent labour cost of 22% is met throughout the year.

This role is hands on and requires a dedicated individual who has a creative flair, is a foodie and is looking to put their stamp on a very unique, versatile and beautiful location.

Heritage portfolio was founded in Edinburgh in 2002 and since then has consistently produced outstanding catering and event services for private party, private dining, wedding and corporate clients throughout the UK. We have also offered exceptional 'in-house' cafe services in some of Britain's leading visitor attractions, where we have developed a loyal repeat customer base.

Many of our business clients and venue partners have worked with us, and only us, throughout the past decade and more, because they know they can put their faith in our unwavering commitment to the highest possible standards of cooking, service and imaginative event delivery.

Our mantra is 'building a business to be proud of', and as we grow and flourish in the world of bespoke events and weddings, we still remain true to our original ethos: to provide an amazing experience that goes beyond the remarkable food we serve.

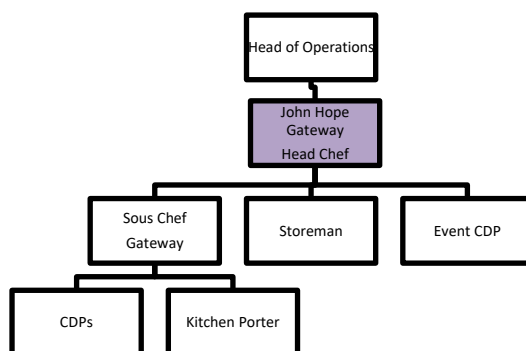


1. Purpose of the Job – State concisely the aim of the job.

- Maximise the profitability of the contract within area of responsibility and deliver the required results
- Lead, develop, manage and motivate a high performing kitchen team to the agreed standards ensuring that the client receives services of the highest quality
- Support the Head Chef in the development of menus, standards and team.
- Complete and update all kitchen (JHG) department SOPs on an annual basis or as required
- Ensure that team meetings and briefings are carried out on a weekly basis and that for large scale events, regular planning meetings are in place with all stake holders
- Manage the services and teams to the agreed standards – SSW, HACCAP, COSH, etc
- Ensure that business deadlines and targets are hit: 23% food cost is maintained monthly
- Lead the team and take responsibility when needed, act with initiative, demonstrate energy and enthusiasm
- Demonstrate a high level of thought leadership and act as change agent.
- Maintain all records and documentation in an organised and coherent manner.
- Recruitment, retention, training and succession planning for the event delivery team

2. Dimensions – Point out the main figures / indicators to give some insight on the “volumes” managed by the position and/or the activity of the Department.

3. Organisation chart – Indicate schematically the position of the job within the organisation. It is sufficient to indicate one hierarchical level above (including possible functional boss) and, if applicable, one below the position. In the horizontal direction, the other jobs reporting to the same superior should be indicated.



4. Context and main issues – Describe the most difficult types of problems the jobholder has to face (internal or external to Sodexo) and/or the regulations, guidelines, practices that are to be adhered to.

Responsibility of the Sous Chef:

- Assist in controlling kitchen labour budgets in line with agreed structure and business levels
- Ensuring all H&S and Food Safety is up to date and accurate, annually updating all HACCP plans for kitchen areas
- Assist in Kitchen team recruitment, training and development
- Working closely with the gardening teams on growing plan, development of the kitchen garden
- Assist in completing accurate menu costings, menu cycles

- Ensuring our food is innovative, competitive and in keeping with the expectations of RBGE
- Full menu rotations and costings inline with the RBGE contractual requirements
- Ensuring that the team are trained annually following the training matrix



5. Main assignments – Indicate the main activities / duties to be conducted in the job.

Growth, client and customer satisfaction

- Identify organic growth opportunities through innovation and new initiatives across the retail and event food offerings
- Work closely with the Head chef and operations manager on theming menus, dishes and offerings around the RBGE exhibitions and seasonal offerings
- Seeks new ways to drive revenue and grow accounts, selling new service lines, in conjunction with the Head of Department
- Ensure contract is performing within the agreed SLAs at all times to meet Heritage Portfolio commitments
- Ensure that clients receive services delivered within contractual terms and these are delivered in a cost effective way
- Management of the commercial performance and improvement in management of all P&L requirements working with the kitchen team following all existing commercial processes.
- Improvement of the training plans and the skill set of the regular casual staff.
- Line management of kitchen teams. Providing consistent support focused on developing operational delivery standards
- Assist in planning and management of the food offer for programmed events (i.e. Christmas at the Botanic, Botanic Lates)

Rigorous management of results

- Work with Head Chef to set and agree overall annual budgets with finance and develop unit business plans and local area plans which link to the overall site strategy
- Analyse and review all financial measures and tools to ensure positive financial performance through accurate forecasting and account management
- Seek new ways to drive revenue and maximise sales by implementing innovative ideas across all operational departments
- Continually seek ways to maximise profitability and enhance service quality by driving excellence and innovations in service delivery and pushing for more efficient service delivery and cost efficiencies
- Ensure that health and safety is given the number one priority by delivering all Safeguard administration in advance of and during logistical operations. Lead where appropriate, and take part in management and employee briefings to deliver safety information to include Food Safety, Health and Safety, Fire Safety, First Aid and any statutory, client or venue specific safety requirements
- Ensure the business complies with all Company and client policies and procedures/site rules and statutory regulations and that licences and qualifications are met and retained, and consequences managed appropriately.
- Ensure that all audits such as EHO, Unit Business Health Checks are complied with and Mystery Shops etc.
- Ensure that the appropriate training and development plans are in place for all employees within the events team to ensure that statutory requirements are met, and development training activities are carried out and recorded to assist with career development and succession planning
- Ensure stock is managed by carrying out stock counts and fixed asset and cash handling audits in line with the procedures set out in the unit business health check
- Effective management of suppliers
- Ensure directs reports are delivering contract to the right quality standards by reviewing and challenging reports on achievements against SLAs and ensuring action plans are put in place to ensure the SLAs are met.
- Undertake operational duties as required to support the business

Leadership and people management

- Recruit, induct, motivate, manage, train and develop all employees

- Lead excellence in performance through coaching and drive a greater understanding of technical competence versus behavioural capability
- Manage the team and provide them with guidance on operational issues to ensure the business objectives are met
- Manage contracted employees, fixed term and casual labour in line with the labour productivity tools, policies and processes
- Take responsibility for the management of all direct reports including recruitment, induction, training and performance
- Coach and mentor direct report
- Grow strong relationships with clients to ensure a profitable long-term partnership
- Hold regular team meetings with the team to ensure the cascade of information down to unit level employees.

Innovation and Change

- Continuous professional development in industry/specialism
- Continuously seek ways to enhance quality through innovation and cost efficiency by monitoring performance against existing standards
- Evolve site strategies around sustainability developing the culinary performance on site by progressing the relationship with existing key commercial partners and the horticultural team

Brand Notoriety

- Promote Heritage Portfolio as the preferred employer, internally and externally, adhering to the HPL recruitment policies and raise the profile of HPL in local communities, building relationships with key stakeholders
- Promote the health and well-being of employees
- Drive all aspects of service excellence across the business area including brand integrity, quality, compliance, corporate social responsibility, and service standards.

Planning and Organising

- Plan and prioritise workload and tasks effectively for self and others to minimise relativity, maintain a work life balance and ensure the right number and calibre of personnel are allocated to logistics tasks

6. Accountabilities

Support the Head Chef:

- **Efficient Kitchen Operations** – Oversee team performance, service delivery, and day-to-day kitchen management.
 - **Food Quality & Safety Compliance** – Maintain high standards in food preparation, hygiene, and health & safety, with accurate record-keeping.
 - **Menu Development & Consistency** – Support menu creation and ensure all dishes meet specification and quality expectations.
 - **Resource & Equipment Management** – Manage stock accurately and ensure all kitchen equipment is functional and maintained.
- **Customer & Staff Engagement** – Act on feedback, collaborate with retail managers, and manage staff performance to ensure excellent service.

7. Person Specification – Indicate the skills, knowledge and experience that the job holder should require to conduct the role effectively

Essential knowledge and skills

- Previous experience at Sous Chef level in a similar operation



- Menu development, planning, rotations incorporating seasonality
- Ability to plan and cost a menu accurately
- Chef leadership and management experience
- Excellent culinary skills with a flair for innovation and creativity
- Valid L2 food hygiene certificate
- Excellent spoken and written English
- Strong organizational skills
- Strong leadership skills
- Basic IT skills
- High standards of personal presentation
- Intermediate Food Hygiene

Desirable

- IOSH
- Use of budgeting and menu planning tools
- Advanced Food Hygiene

8. Competencies – Indicate which of the Sodexo core competencies and any professional competencies that the role requires

Growth, Client & Customer Satisfaction / Quality of Services provided	Leadership & People Management
Rigorous management of results	Innovation and Change
Brand Notoriety	Analysis and Decision Making
Commercial Awareness	Industry Acumen
Employee Engagement	
Learning & Development	

9. Management Approval – To be completed by document owner

Version	V2	Date	24/10/2025
Document Owner			

10. Employee Approval – To be completed by employee

Employee Name		Date	
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