

Job Description



Position:	Sous Chef
Immediate manager:	Head Chef
Additional reporting line to:	Head of Operations
Position location:	Edinburgh Zoo

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 Edinburgh Zoo.

The primary responsibilities of the Sous Chef are to support the Head Chef with the day-to-day operation of all catering outlets within the Zoo, including cafes, restaurants, mobile units and event delivery. The ideal candidate will ensure compliance standards are met at all times, as well as maintaining the highest levels of quality and service within all menu delivery. Sustainability initiatives in line with both Heritage Portfolio and RZSS ambitions must be considered at all times.

Working closely with the kitchen team, the role will deputise for the Head Chef in their absence and maintain the food standards, 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 is a hands-on role that requires a dedicated individual with creative flair, a genuine interest in food, and a recognition of this unique venue, our customers and client.

Heritage portfolio was founded in Edinburgh in 2002 and since then has consistently produced outstanding catering and event services for 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 retail catering, events and weddings, we still remain true to our original ethos: to provide an amazing experience that goes beyond the remarkable food we serve.

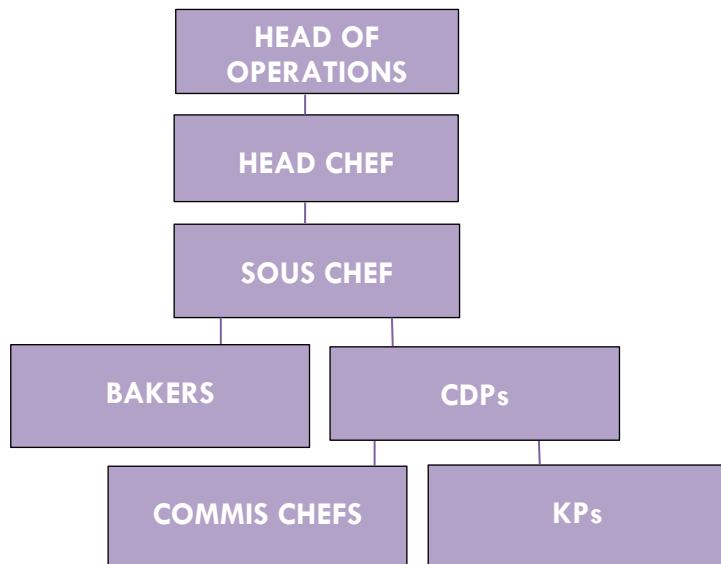
1. Purpose of the Job

- To 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.
- To support the Innovation & Development Chef and Head Chef in the development of menus, standards and team training.
- Complete and update all kitchen 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 stakeholders.
- Manage the services and teams to the agreed standards – SSW, HACCP, 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.
- Maintain all records and documentation in an organised and coherent manner.
- Support with recruitment, retention, training and succession planning within the kitchen team.



2. Organisation Chart



3. Main Assignments

Compliance

- Assist in controlling kitchen labour budgets in line with agreed structure and business levels.
- Ensure 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.
- Assist in completing accurate menu costings.
- Ensure allergen management is at the forefront of all kitchen operations, and that the team are trained to the same standard.

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 Innovation & Development Chef on theming menus, dishes and offerings around exhibitions and seasonal specials.
- Seek new ways to drive revenue and grow accounts, selling new service lines, in conjunction with the Head of Operations.
- 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.

Rigorous management of results

- Work with Head of Operations and 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.
- Ensure compliance of all audits such as EHO, Safegard and Unit Business Health Checks.
- Ensure stock is managed by carrying out monthly stock counts accurately and within the time frames stipulated.
- Effective management of suppliers, including recording and reporting any purchase or procurement issues.



- 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 behavioral 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.
- Grow strong relationships with clients to ensure a profitable long-term partnership.
- Promote Heritage Portfolio as the preferred employer, internally and externally, adhering to the HPL recruitment policies and standards.
- Drive all aspects of service excellence across the business area including brand integrity, quality, compliance, corporate social responsibility, and service standards.

4. 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.

5. Person Specification

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 Level 3 food hygiene certificate
- Excellent spoken and written English
- Strong organizational skills
- Strong leadership skills
- Strong IT skills
- High standards of personal presentation

Desirable:

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



6. Management Approval – To be completed by document owner

Version	V3	Date	04/12/2025
Document Owner	Lizzie Arber		

7. Employee Approval – To be completed by employee

Employee Name		Date	
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