Sous Chef

Job Description

The Role

Job title:	Sous Chef
Department:	Commercial Services
Responsible to:	Executive Chef
Location:	Catering
Salary:	Grade 6: £ starting at £30,986 and progressing to £36,320 per annum. Please note: it is the university's policy to appoint new staff at the bottom of the pay scale, unless there are demonstrable exceptional skills and experience the candidate brings with them.
Term:	Full time: average 35 hours per week on a flexible rota
Relationships with:	Suppliers, staff, students, visitors and colleagues within the industry

Purpose

To support the Executive Head Chef in leading and developing the University's food operation, ensuring the delivery of a high-quality, commercially successful and customer-focused food service that enhances the student, staff and visitor experience.

The Sous Chef plays a key leadership role within the kitchen brigade, acting as a role model for standards, culture and performance. The postholder will lead food production, support team development and help deliver innovative, sustainable and commercially successful food offers across student dining, retail catering, hospitality, conferences and events.

The Sous Chef will deputise for the Executive Head Chef when required and work closely with colleagues across Food & Beverage, Hospitality and Events to ensure the delivery of a seamless customer experience.

Key Responsibilities

1. Deputise for the Executive Head Chef as required, providing leadership and operational oversight of food production and kitchen teams.
2. Lead, motivate and develop kitchen staff, promoting high standards of performance, professionalism, accountability and teamwork.
3. Support the delivery of the University's food strategy through excellent food production, innovation and customer-focused service.
4. Oversee the day-to-day preparation and delivery of food across student dining, retail catering, hospitality, conferences, events and special functions.
5. Support the development and implementation of menus and food offers that are innovative, commercially viable and aligned with customer expectations.
6. Work collaboratively with the Executive Head Chef, Food & Beverage Operations Manager and Conference & Events teams to deliver high-quality food and hospitality experiences.
7. Promote a culture of continuous improvement by using customer feedback, operational insight and sales performance to identify opportunities to enhance quality, efficiency and customer satisfaction.
8. Support the delivery of sustainable food practices through responsible sourcing, waste reduction and efficient use of resources.
9. Monitor food costs, stock levels, purchasing and wastage controls to support the achievement of financial and operational targets.
10. Develop and coach junior chefs and kitchen assistants, supporting succession planning and talent development within the brigade.
11. Build positive and effective relationships with colleagues across Campus Experience to ensure a seamless customer experience.
12. Ensure compliance with all food safety, allergen management, health and safety and legislative requirements, maintaining the highest standards across all kitchen operations.
13. Support the successful delivery of major University activities including conferences, graduation ceremonies, hospitality events and VIP functions.
14. Act as an ambassador for the University's values, food standards and commitment to excellence in student, staff and visitor experience.
15. Undertake any other duties commensurate with the level and responsibilities of the post.

General responsibilities:

- The University is committed to equality of opportunity. All staff are required to comply with current legislation, University policies and good practice guidance.

- All staff are required to act in a way that safeguards the health and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults at all times. The post holder must be familiar with and adhere to appropriate safeguarding policies and guidance and participate in related mandatory/statutory training. Managers have a responsibility to ensure their team members understand their individual responsibilities with regard to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

- All staff are required to participate in the University appraisal process and should ensure they are familiar with the process and plan time to prepare for their appraisal. Following the

appraisal, staff are expected to undertake in any necessary learning and development and work towards the objectives that have been set.

- The University expects staff to attend any training designated as mandatory and to undertake learning and development activities to support their role. Managers must facilitate learning and development within their teams.

- It is a condition of employment that staff will not disclose any information obtained in the course of their duties other than to those entitled to receive it. The post holder must ensure that the confidentiality of personal data remains secure and that restricted information or highly restricted information to which they have access remains confidential during and after their employment at Royal Agricultural University. All staff must undergo appropriate data protection training as required.

- All absence from work must be reported in accordance with the University's absence procedures and recorded on iTrent.

- The University acknowledges its responsibility to provide a safe, smoke free environment, to its employees, service users and visitors. It is the policy of the University not to allow smoking on University premises other than in specifically designated areas.

University Values

As a University we have chosen five values to underpin our learning community. These are the values which we will all work by and for which we want the RAU to be known. We are:

- Collaborative - we believe in the power of working together. We are stronger as a community of practice - inspiring each other, identifying shared goals, and providing reciprocal support leads to greater success.
- Open-Minded - we are receptive to new ideas and we value the diversity of experiences and skills. We are committed to listening to everyone across the RAU community.
- Resourceful - we adopt creative approaches to achieve our goals while setting higher standards, promoting professionalism and sustainability.
- Responsible - individually and collectively we take accountability for our actions working with integrity to achieve the highest ethical standards.

Inclusive - we acknowledge the fundamental value and dignity of all individuals and are committed to maintaining an environment that seeks to eliminate all forms of discrimination and respects diverse traditions, heritages, and experiences

Person Specification

Qualifications

Qualifications	**Essential (E) or Desirable (D)**	**Measured by;** A – Application form B – Interview C - Presentation
Professional Cookery qualification at Level 3 or equivalent professional qualification	E	A
Food Safety qualification appropriate to the role	E	A
Supervisory, team leadership or management qualification	D	A
First Aid qualification	D	A

Knowledge, Skills & Experience

Knowledge, Skills & Experience	**Essential (E) or Desirable (D)**	**Measured by;** A – Application form B – Interview C - Presentation
Significant experience within a professional catering, hospitality or food service environment	E	A, I
Experience supervising and developing teams within a busy food production operation	E	A, I
Experience producing high-quality food across a range of service styles, including retail catering, hospitality, conferencing or events	E	A, I
Experience supporting menu development and food innovation	E	A, I
Experience managing food costs, stock control and waste reduction	E	A, I
Strong knowledge of food safety, allergen management and health and safety legislation	E	A, I
Strong organisational, communication and interpersonal skills	E	A, I
Strong customer focus and commitment to service excellence	E	A, I
Understanding of sustainable food practices and responsible sourcing	D	A, I
Experience working within Higher Education, conference, hospitality or multi-service catering environments	D	A, I
Experience supporting apprentices, trainees or junior staff development	D	A, I
Competent IT skills, including Microsoft Office and catering management systems	D	A, I

Other Requirements

Other requirements	**Essential (E) or Desirable (D)**	**Measured by;** A – Application form B – Interview C - Presentation
Ability to work flexibly, including evenings, weekends and University events	E	A, B
Ability to deputise for the Executive Head Chef when required	E	A, B
Commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion	E	A, B
Commitment to health and safety and continuous professional development	E	A, B
Ability to act as an ambassador for the University and Hospitality Department	E	A, B

Application Procedure

If you are interested in applying for this role, please send:

- University Application Form together with the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form available on the University website www.rau.ac.uk) – you may attach your up to date CV if you wish to add additional information.
- Details of two referees who must be people who can comment authoritatively on you as a person and as an employee in relation to the level of the post, and must include your current or most recent employer or their representative.
- Please forward to the HR Team, Royal Agricultural University, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 6JS or via email to jobs@rau.ac.uk stating where you saw the advert for the role
- Informal enquiries can be made to James Maulgue, Executive Head Chef (James.maulgue@rau.ac.uk) or Ryan Hanson, Director of Campus Experience (Ryan.hanson @rau.ac.uk)
- **Closing date**: 6 December 2026 with **Interviews on:** 17 and 18 December 2026
- We acknowledge receipt of all applications within two working days. If you do not receive an email from us after submitting your application, please let us know by sending a new email **without any attachments** to Human.Resources@rau.ac.uk so we can check if your application has reached us.
- Should you be selected for interview please be aware that we are unable to reimburse interview expenses.
- **Please note**: it is the university's policy to appoint new staff at the bottom of the pay scale, unless there are demonstrable exceptional skills and experience the candidate brings with them.

The RAU is an equal opportunities employer and we particularly welcome applications from black and minority ethnic candidates as they are underrepresented within the RAU at this level.