

Job Description – Cook (Specialist Further Education College)

Job Title: Cook

Responsible to: Business Operations Manager

Responsible for: Catering Assistants and/or Kitchen Support Staff as appropriate

Location: Various - Great Barr and Tamworth

Job Purpose

To plan, prepare and deliver high-quality, nutritious meals that meet the diverse dietary, cultural and health needs of learners within a specialist FE environment. The Cook will ensure the safe and efficient operation of the college kitchen, supervise kitchen staff, maintain compliance with food safety standards, and contribute to a positive, inclusive student experience. To maintain a 5-star food hygiene rating.

Key Responsibilities

1. Catering & Food Preparation

- Plan weekly and termly menus tailored to the dietary, medical, sensory and cultural needs of learners, including those with specialist requirements (e.g., allergies, modified textures, intolerances).
- Prepare high-quality meals in line with nutritional guidelines and college policies.
- Ensure appropriate portion control, allergen management and waste minimisation.
- Set up and clean down kitchen areas daily, ensuring all food preparation, service and storage areas meet hygiene standards.
- Monitor stock levels, rotate stock by date, and maintain accurate inventory records.
- Prepare food orders, liaise with suppliers and resolve any issues with deliveries or invoicing.
- Ensure all equipment is handled correctly and safely, following manufacturer guidelines and COSHH regulations.
- Maintain accurate records relating to food safety, cleaning schedules, temperature checks and any other required documentation.

2. Health, Safety & Compliance

- Ensure all catering operations comply with Health & Safety legislation, Food Hygiene regulations, Environmental Health expectations and organisational policies.
- Identify and report equipment faults, maintenance needs, hazards, breakages or concerns promptly.
- Follow and model best practice in infection control, safe food handling and allergen management.
- Support the catering service to operate safely within agreed budgets.

3. Staff Supervision

- Lead, support and supervise kitchen staff, as appropriate ensuring duties are carried out effectively and safely; staff could refer to students with additional needs completing work experience.
- Delegate tasks appropriately, taking account of staff competence, ability, communication needs and daily service needs.
- Support the induction, ongoing training and development of catering assistants.
- Undertake delegated supervisory responsibilities such as probation reviews, return-to-work meetings and supervisions (where appropriate).
- Ensure effective communication within the team.
- Uphold and model college values, ensuring staff behaviour and standards reflect organisational expectations.

4. General College Responsibilities

- Work collaboratively with wider college teams to support learner needs (e.g., pastoral, therapy teams).
- Respond flexibly and efficiently to last-minute changes in learner requirements or service needs.
- Adhere to college safeguarding, whistleblowing, complaints and behaviour management procedures.

- Participate in training, performance reviews, staff meetings and quality assurance processes.
- Represent the college positively at all times and contribute to a welcoming, inclusive environment.
- Carry out any other reasonable tasks that support the delivery of a safe, high-quality catering service.

Person Specification – Cook (Specialist FE College)

Experience (Essential)

- Experience of catering work in an educational or similar setting.
- Experience of menu planning with reference to budgetary control and nutritional considerations.

Experience (Desirable)

- Experience of supervising and appraising staff.
- Experience at management level in a similar setting.

Skills (Essential)

- Good knowledge of catering practices, including the correct use and storage of relevant products.
- Strong knowledge of food safety requirements.
- Ability to devise and implement effective systems of working.
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team.
- Effective leadership skills.
- Ability to motivate both teams and individuals.
- Effective verbal and written communication skills.
- Basic IT skills.
- Strong organisational and time-management skills.

Qualifications & Training (Essential)

- Willingness to work towards additional relevant qualifications as required.

- Completion of relevant group induction training upon commencement.

Qualifications & Training (Desirable)

- Relevant catering-related qualifications (e.g., food safety, catering NVQs).

Personal Attributes

- Highly organised and detail-oriented.
- Proactive and adaptable to change.
- Committed to continuous improvement and professional development.
- Strong sense of accountability and integrity.
- Collaborative approach to working with colleagues and stakeholders.
- Kind, patient with a good sense of humour.

Other (Essential)

- Commitment to the values of the organisation.

Other (Desirable)

- Driving licence.