



Job Title:	Head Chef / Kitchen Manager
Department:	Kitchen Department
Reports to:	Venue Manager and Kitchen Operations Manager
Supervision:	Kitchen Team
Federal Award:	Award-Free
Classification:	NA - Managerial Staff (Hotels)
Contract Type:	FTE & Salary - issued with this JD in consultation with GMH and VM.
Ownership:	People & Culture; General Manager of Hospitality (GMH) approved.

JOB SUMMARY

The Head Chef leads all kitchen operations, including menu development, food production, team leadership, safety compliance, cost control, and maintaining the highest food quality and presentation standards. This hands-on role is central to delivering exceptional dining experiences, upholding compliance with the Food Act 2001 (SA) and WHS regulations, and the Fair Work Act 2009.

As Head Chef, you will lead the preparation, cooking, and presentation of high-quality dishes across all kitchen sections, ensuring consistency, accuracy, and alignment with established recipes and venue standards. You'll manage daily prep lists, maintain par levels, and oversee special dietary and allergen requirements to ensure a safe and inclusive dining experience. Working collaboratively with your team will foster a positive kitchen culture that delivers excellence in every service.

This position is vital to maintaining the efficient operation of the kitchen and upholding Matthews Hospitality's values and behaviours, including empowering others, upholding professional standards, operating with honesty and integrity, expressing respect and compassion, and showing up for success.

JOB DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

LEADERSHIP & OPERATIONS

- Collaborate with the Kitchen Operations Manager, GM and Venue Manager on strategy, pricing, and menu updates.
- Manage daily prep lists and recipe cards, ensuring all sections are fully stocked and ready for service in accordance with par levels and accurate prioritisation.
- Oversee and implement special dietary needs and allergy procedures to ensure safety and guest satisfaction.
- Ensure all team members adhere to the venue's uniform and hygiene policy.
- Develop and implement innovative, seasonal menus aligned with customer trends and financial goals.
- Apply advanced culinary techniques and creative flair to design standout dishes that reflect venue identity.
- Maintain a refined palate and ensure consistent dish quality through tasting, testing, and review.
- Work collaboratively with front-of-house to ensure food delivery aligns with service standards and timing.
- Respond to customer feedback and complaints with professionalism and urgency.
- Support functions, events, and large-scale catering as required.

FOOD PREPARATION & EXECUTION

- Set high standards of consistency, quality, and presentation of all food items, aligning with established recipes and venue standards and ensure all staff are trained and capable.

- Lead hands-on prep and service across all sections, setting the standard for quality, taste, and presentation.
- Execute tasks leading by example with the kitchen team, fostering a collaborative environment that supports shared success.
- Manage daily prep lists & recipe cards ensuring all sections are fully stocked and ready for service in line with par levels and accurate prioritisation.
- Oversee special dietary needs and allergy procedures to ensure safety and guest satisfaction.

PEOPLE & CULTURE

- Provide strong leadership, setting clear expectations, offering regular feedback, and promoting a respectful, high-performing team culture.
- Train, coach, and develop your team, junior chefs and apprentices, leading by example and fostering accountability.
- Act as a mentor, supporting the training and development of colleagues, encouraging growth and career progression.
- Conduct pre-service briefings and managed team morale through effective communication and professional conduct.
- Manage, lead and execute recruitment, onboarding, and succession planning for kitchen roles.
- Ensure your team is supported and a positive culture is fostered through efficient and effective rostering, hours, leave management, and supportive and empathetic leadership. Rosters must be published with a minimum of 10 days' advance notice, and leave/workforce management must be effective.
- Competency in fair, just, and reasonable performance management, constructive conversations, and compliance with Fair Work to ensure your leadership and the business's integrity.
- Ensure all team members adhere to the venue's uniform policy.

WHS & FOOD SAFETY

- Ensure safe kitchen operations per WHS Act 2012 and Matthews Hospitality policies.
- Identify, report, and act on any safety hazards, equipment faults, or near-miss incidents.
- Maintain high standards of manual handling, PPE use, and hygiene practices.
- Maintain strict compliance with the Food Act 2001 and food safety requirements including:
 - Temperature logs
 - Safe food storage and labelling
 - Allergen controls
 - Cleaning schedules
- Ensure all team members are certified and follow food safety and hygiene protocols.
- Oversee internal audits and compliance checks.
- Ensure all kitchen equipment is used properly, cleaned, and maintained in good condition.
- Schedule preventative maintenance and escalate urgent repairs promptly.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- Manage stock levels, order supplies, and negotiate with approved suppliers in line with policy.
- Conduct stocktakes, analyse variances, and report discrepancies.
- Minimise waste through portion control, FIFO rotation, and precise prep management.
- Review food cost data and adjust processes to improve profitability.
- Prepare rosters in line with forecasted trade and budgeted wage costs.
- Monitor timesheets, approve hours, and submit accurate payroll data.
- Adjust staffing levels during quiet or peak periods as needed.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- Stay current with culinary trends, industry innovations, and best practices.
- Encourage team learning and upskilling through mentorship and formal training.
- Participate in business reviews, audits, training, MHG inspiration days and venue weekly meetings.

GENERAL DUTIES

- Carry out other tasks or responsibilities as directed by the Venue Manager or Shared Services/Ops team.
- Support business objectives and contribute to the ongoing success of the venue and group.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

- Strong understanding of various cooking methods, ingredients, equipment, and procedures.
- Ability to work efficiently under pressure while maintaining attention to detail.
- Effective communication skills, both verbal and written.
- Strong organisational skills with a focus on quality and consistency.
- Leadership skills with the ability to motivate and guide a team.
- A passion for food and cooking.
- Knowledge of and ability in all sections or strong desire to learn.
- High level of personal and professional hygiene and accountability.
- Ability to work well in a team environment.
- Ability to lead by example and take initiative.
- Positive attitude and willingness to learn, develop, and take on feedback.
- Commitment to the core values of Matthews Hospitality, including respect, integrity, and community support.

QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA

- Minimum Certificate III in Commercial Cookery (or equivalent).
- Extensive senior or head chef experience in a fast-paced, high-standard, à la carte venue.
- Strong leadership, team-building, and mentoring abilities.
- Excellent communication, time management, and conflict resolution skills.
- Creativity, advanced culinary knowledge, and a refined palate.
- Sound understanding of food safety, WHS, and industry legislation.
- Physical stamina and dexterity to manage long shifts and high-pressure services.
- Competence and passion for training and development.

DESIRABLE CRITERIA

- Qualifications in Leadership, Management, or Business (willing to obtain).
- First Aid and Mental Health First Aid certification (willing to obtain).
- HACCP or advanced food safety training.
- Experience in functions, banquets, set menus and large-scale themes and events.

INHERENT PHYSICAL & COGNITIVE JOB REQUIREMENTS

These physical and cognitive requirements reflect the inherent demands of hospitality work. Matthews Hospitality is committed to providing reasonable adjustments to support individuals with disabilities in performing the job's essential functions.

- Ability to stand for long periods at a time.
- Good manual dexterity for handling tools, cooking, or operating POS systems.
- Be well presented and adhere to all safety and hygiene requirements as directed by management and outlined in policy.
- Lifting and carrying heavy items, such as boxes, furniture, stock, kegs, or equipment, requesting help as required (typically up to 20–25kg).
- Stamina and endurance to manage physically demanding shifts, often in hot or fast-paced environments.
- Physical resilience to manage repetitive motions and reduce the risk of strain or injury over time.
- Strong focus and concentration to maintain accuracy and safety in fast-paced, high-pressure environments.
- Emotional resilience and stress management to handle demanding customers, urgent tasks, or unexpected challenges calmly and professionally.

- Adaptability and quick thinking to respond to priority changes, multitask efficiently, and problem-solve on the spot.
- Good hand-eye coordination for accurate and safe handling of items or machinery.
- Bending, twisting, and reaching frequently to access shelves, under benches, or equipment.
- Pushing and pulling trolleys, bins, or carts as part of stock rotation or cleaning duties.
- Ability to walk quickly and repeatedly across large venues or shop floors.
- Safely use ladders or step stools when accessing high shelves or storage.
- Balance and stability to navigate crowded or slippery areas safely.
- Effective respiratory health in environments with food smells, dust, chemicals, or fumes.
- Good vision and spatial awareness to navigate busy workspaces and avoid hazards.
- Capacity to work in varying temperatures, including hot kitchens, cold storage, or outdoor maintenance.
- Fine motor skills for precision tasks like food prep, equipment handling, or minor repairs.

I, _____, acknowledge that I have read and understood this job description and that I am able to perform all the duties and responsibilities required of me.

Signature:

Date:

Document Quality Control	
Document Name	Head Chef [Job Description]
Author	Lee Cook, Cristian Carbone & Katy Sargent
Owner	People and Culture
Approved by	Lee Cook, GMH
Version and Date	v.1: April 2018 v.2: July 2025
Review Date	To be confirmed