

Sous chef

As a Sous Chef your key responsibilities will be:

- Running the kitchen when the head chef is away
- Ensuring your brigade has high culinary standards
- Managing food purchasing and storage
- Maintaining a safe and hygienic kitchen environment
- Helping create new recipes and write menus

Hours of work

Most chefs at whatever level work split shifts, including weekends and evenings. You'll work at least 40 hours a week, but probably longer – particularly in fine-dining kitchens. However, in some sectors of contract catering, such as education and B&I, you might work office hours

What skills do you need?

- A flair with ingredients
- An ability to stay calm when the pressure mounts
- Strong leadership skills to motivate your brigade of chefs
- First rate culinary skills

What qualifications do you need?

Many sous chefs have got where they are today by training on the job and taking every opportunity for placements (or stages) in top kitchens. However, formal qualifications will undoubtedly get you to the top faster. You can work your way up the ranks by taking the Modern Apprenticeship route as well as studying for NVQs or SVQs. Alternatively, you can study full time at college. Useful qualifications include:

- City & Guilds diplomas in professional cookery
- BTEC HND in professional cookery
- A foundation degree in culinary arts
- Health and safety and food hygiene certificates

Aston Recruitment

Fleming House : 5 Fleming Road : Kirkton Campus : Livingston : EH54 7BN

t. +44 (0) 1506 415 445

www.astonrecruit.co.uk

Who would it suit?

Obviously, you won't get far if you can't cook, but to really see some action behind the stove, you need passion and a love of ingredients. You'll be someone who performs well under pressure and recognises the importance of motivating and leading junior members of staff who may also be working under pressure.

What sort of salary can I expect?

The UK average is £22,000 to £28,000, but you can earn more.

Where can I go from here?

Well, if you've got talent and you've put in the hours, there really isn't anything standing between you and the role of head chef.

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