

CHEFS

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Chefs and cooks are responsible for preparing and cooking across a wide range of catering outlets. Chef is the term normally used in kitchens at hotels and restaurants; cook is usually the term used in hospitals, schools, fast-food outlets, cafes and snack bars. Cooks are unlikely to meet the work permit criteria.

The type of work carried out by chefs and the structure of the kitchen hierarchy is often dependent on the size and nature of the establishment they work in. For this reason, job titles are not a clear indicator of the level of responsibility of the post.

N.B. Chef De Rang is not a chef position; the job is that of a head waiter or waiter in charge of a section (see Hospitality occupation sheet).

INDUSTRY REQUIREMENTS

No formal educational requirements are required to work as a chef. It is, however, possible to attain qualifications up to HND level in culinary related subjects. These are not normally required to carry out the job (see [Advertising](#) section below).

REGISTRATION WITH A PROFESSIONAL BODY

There is no registration requirement for restaurant employees.

Employers must be registered with their local authority under EC Regulation 852/2004 (see [Annex A](#)).

CASEWORKER TREATMENT

B&C:

1. Posts that meet the skills criteria

Head Chefs – Head Chefs meet the skills criteria in all establishments, other than fast food / standard fare, unless there is specific cause for doubt on an individual application. “Standard fare” means typical pub food (e.g. – burgers, pre-prepared pies, fish and chips, curries, etc.) or coffee shop food.

Second Chefs – Second Chefs meet the skills criteria in all establishments, other than fast food / standard fare, unless there is specific cause for doubt on an individual application. This applies where there is only one Second Chef working alongside the Head Chef or to cover in their absence. If there are two or more “Second Chefs” working side-by-side, the position should be considered as a third chef (see below).

Other chefs in a high class establishment – Other chefs are likely to meet the skills criteria in an establishment with either of the following well-recognised national awards:

- One or more Michelin Stars
- Three or more AA Rosettes

These awards relate to the quality of restaurants only. They should not be confused with other ratings that may apply to other aspects of a hotel (e.g. AA stars).

2. Posts that **MAY** meet the skills criteria:

Specialist chefs – for example, pastry chefs, vegetarian chefs, specialist ethnic cuisine chefs such as Dim Sum chefs or Tandoori chefs. These posts may meet the skills criteria, provided there is a genuine vacancy for a specialist chef at a skilled level, and the post on offer is the only chef or the lead chef for that speciality.

Caseworkers should request copies of menus / publicity material to verify that a number of specialist dishes are served in the restaurant and that a specialist chef is required.

Third chefs – in larger kitchens, there may be a role for a team leader below the level of Head Chef and Second Chef. In a post that meets the criteria, that chef would be leading a team of staff, not just supervising one or two individuals.

Where there are a high number of supervisory positions, caseworkers should check the opening hours of the establishment. There may be a need for additional supervisors to cover different shift patterns.

Applications should not be approved for supervisory roles if half or more of the kitchen staff are at the same or higher level than the post on offer.

For both **specialist chefs** AND **third chefs**, caseworkers should seek clarification on the experience requirements stated by employers (using paragraph P61C) if they have doubts about the experience required for the post, particularly if the salary is close to the minimum of the ranges stated below.

In addition, caseworkers may have doubts about whether there is a genuine vacancy for the number of specialist chefs or third chefs stated on the staff list / hierarchy chart. The number of covers, opening times, menu and turnover are all indicative of the number of staff required. If necessary, business bank statements or accounts can be requested to verify the monthly wage bill for a reasonable period (usually 3 months), and whether the employer is able to support the number of staff stated.

3. Posts that **DO NOT** meet the skills criteria:

Chefs in fast food / standard fare – Chefs in takeaways, fast food restaurants and pubs offering standard fare (usually brewery chains) are unlikely to meet the skills criteria. The dishes and sauces may be bought in ready-made, rather than prepared from fresh/raw ingredients. Alternatively, dishes may be mass-produced using standard recipe cards. There is unlikely to be a high degree of cooking / food preparation skills or innovation required.

Cooks / Assistant Chefs / Commis Chefs – These posts are at NVQ level 2.

Food Handlers / Catering Assistants / Kitchen Porters – These posts are at NVQ level 1.

Establishing the worker

Caseworkers should note that some ethnic cuisine restaurants may not have the same hierarchy structures in their kitchens as non ethnic outlets in the UK and may not use the same job titles. For example, in major hotels in India, where the bulk of the skilled professional cooking talent resides, a “Head Chef” may be more of a management role, with specialist cuisine being led by other chefs whose job titles may not match those of western kitchen hierarchies.

Caseworkers should therefore focus on the duties and responsibilities of the post and the type of establishment, rather than on the job title itself, when considering references from past employers.

Caseworkers may also request copies of menus, staff hierarchies, publicity material and photographs of the overseas establishment if required. References should be sent for verification checks where necessary.

TWES Training

This occupation is not suitable for TWES training.

TWES Work Experience

This occupation is suitable if the work experience criteria are complied with. The work experience programme should be detailed and bespoke for the individual and the employer, naming the supervisor.

Where caseworkers have doubts that the OSN will be supernumerary, caseworkers should consider the following questions, seeking clarification from employers where necessary:

- Will the OSN be completing tasks essential to the employer’s core business?
- Has a detailed TWES programme been provided?
- Will the OSN be shadowing, or be directly supervised by, a senior member of staff who is working at NVO level 3 or above?
- What is the ratio of TWES permit holders to permanent staff?
- Are there any current vacancies in the departments where the OSN will be working?
- If the OSN leaves will they need to be replaced?
- Can the employer financially support the TWES arrangements? How does the employer benefit from TWES?

The individual’s career history, their qualifications and the quality and size of the employer should also be assessed to determine whether the individual will benefit from the work experience.

Where the OSN will be filling a vacancy, the application should be considered under the B&C criteria. If an application is approved under TWES, and caseworkers still have concerns that the OSN will be filling a vacancy, or that the TWES programme will not be adhered to, they should consider requesting a post-issue check.

SALARIES

Salaries vary greatly depending on the location and nature of the establishment. A higher salary for a specialist chef or third chef may be an indicator that the post is more highly skilled. Where such a job requires at least three years experience at NVQ3 the salary should reflect this level of skill and experience, and be at a level which is proportionately higher than the minimum shown in the range below. Further clarification on the skill level of such posts should **not** normally be sought if the salary is above £16,900, unless there is specific cause for doubt on an individual application. These salaries are for a 40hr week:

Occupation	Salary Range
Head Chef	£20,000 - £70,000
Second Chef	£18,000 - £35,000
Other chef in a high class establishment	£16,900 - £30,000
Specialist chef e.g. Pastry Chef, Dim Sum Chef, Tandoori Chef	£14,000 - £30,000
Third chef	£14,000 - £25,000

ADVERTISING

Jobcentre Plus advertising is acceptable for all hotel and catering occupations. It is common for large chains to use recruitment agencies or specialist websites.

Chefs at a level that meets the work permit criteria are normally recruited based on previous experience. Advertisements for management (Head Chef) positions may sometimes ask for relevant qualifications (e.g. HND), but these should state clearly that previous experience is also acceptable as an alternative to qualifications. Such a high level of qualification would not be appropriate for lower-level posts. Advertisements that ask for a qualification alone or imply that a qualification is required may be considered restrictive.

Formal qualifications may be required to work in a high class establishment (as defined above), but such qualifications will normally be NVQ level 2 or level 3. It is the experience required for such posts that determines whether or not the post meets the work permit skills criteria.

Caterer & Hotelkeeper: Reed Business Publishing, Quadrant House, The Quadrant, Sutton, Surrey, SM2 5AS. Tel. 020 8652 8680

Hospitality Magazine (The Magazine for Hospitality Management Professionals)
Institute of Hospitality, 34 West Sutton Street, Sutton, Surrey, SM1 1SH. Tel: 020 8661 4900. Fax: 020 8661 4901

www.caterer.com

www.caterweb.co.uk

www.hotaljobs.com

www.reed.co.uk

FURTHER INFORMATION

British Hospitality Association (BHA), Queens House, 55-56 Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, WC2A 3BH. Tel: 020 7404 7744, Fax: 020 7404 7799, Email: bha@bha.org.uk

Institute of Hospitality Trinity Court, 34 West Sutton Street, Sutton, Surrey, SM1 1SH. Tel: 020 8661 4900. Fax: 020 8661 4901. www.instituteofhospitality.org.uk

Hotel and Catering Jobcentre, 1-3 Denmark Street, London, WC2H 8LR. Tel: 020 7853 3200, Fax: 020 7853 3241

People 1st, 2nd Floor, Armstrong House, 38 Market Square, Uxbridge, Middlesex, UB8 1LH. Tel: 0870 060 2550. Email: info@people1st.co.uk Web: www.people1st.co.uk
<mailto:nto@htf.org.uk>

Springboard UK, 3 Denmark Street, London, WC2H 8LP. Tel: 020 7497 865. E-mail: info.London@springboarduk.org.uk

ANNEX A

Registration requirements for employers

EC Regulation 852/2004 replaces the requirement under the now revoked Food Premises (Registration) Regulations 1991 as amended and requires that if an employer operates a food business they must register with the local authority.

Those premises that were registered under the old regulations need not re-register under the new regulations.

Links to the new regulations can be found below.

England - <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2006/20060014.htm>

Scotland - <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/ssi2006/20060003.htm>

Wales - <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/wales/wsi2006/20060031e.htm>

Northern Ireland - <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/sr/sr2006/20060003.htm>

Caseworkers should ask the employer for evidence of registration if this has not already been submitted to establish the UK employer.