Executive Chef

Candidate information pack
November 2022
An overview of St John’s College, Cambridge

An inspiring place in which to work

St. John’s College is one of the largest of the University of Cambridge’s 31 colleges. Colleges are where students live, eat and socialise, and receive small group teaching sessions. St John’s has about 900 students, 160 Fellows (that is, resident academics who teach and research) and over 250 staff.

The buildings and grounds of St John’s are a magnificent environment in which to work, but it is the people of St John’s who give the place its unique identity. Diversity, independence and intellectual excellence make it a dynamic place in which people can thrive. Read more about St John’s on the College’s website: [www.joh.cam.ac.uk](http://www.joh.cam.ac.uk).

Background

Fine food and hospitality are an integral part of college life at St John’s. Dining in the historic surrounds of the College is a unique experience and St John’s is extremely proud of its reputation as a hospitality destination. When College events permit, the fine dining facilities and events spaces are available to external customers and the College runs a significant number of dinners, receptions and conferences for other University academics and Departments and other commercial customers.

This is an exciting time to be joining the team. The College has recently appointed a new Catering and Hospitality Manager and our new Café will open in the New Year alongside our redeveloped bar and buttery.

The redesigned spaces bring opportunities for creativity to tempt College members, and the introduction of the café will require new ways of working that will strengthen Catering operations. Increasing the role that Catering plays in enhancing College life and creating communities amongst Fellows, students and staff.

**We are looking to recruit an experienced, inspiring and committed leader. The ideal candidate will bring a desire to create stunning food offers across the College alongside and an excellent work ethic and a passion for developing both themselves and their team.**

This is a fabulous opportunity for someone to enhance the reputation of food and service at St John’s College and to inspire the experienced teams.
The primary aim of the Catering and Hospitality Department is to provide a high standard of food and customer service and to exceed the expectations of the wide range of College members. The Department seeks to deliver a range of modern and traditional catering with a focus on using fresh ingredients from local suppliers where possible.

The Department is led by the Catering and Hospitality Manager who heads up a Senior Management Team comprising the Executive Chef, the Assistant Catering Manager and the Retail Manager.

The Assistant Catering Manager leads the provision of formal dining and events in College, both for internal and external customers. His reports include:

- The Functions Team which delivers events including Formal Hall, conferences and private dining held within College.
- The Fellows' Butler and team who provide excellent service to the Master and Fellows of the College on all occasions.
- The Assistant Hospitality Manager who coordinates bookings in all the dining rooms and catering facilities.

The Retail Manager leads the day to day delivery of the Buttery, Café and Bar. This individual line manages:

- The Buttery Manager and his team who are responsible for feeding students, staff, Fellows and College guests in the Buttery, primarily at lunch or dinner time.
- The Bar Manager and team who serve excellent drinks and snacks while exercising a duty of care and ensuring full licensing law compliance.
- The new Café Team, led by the Head Barista. They will be responsible for preparing and serving delicious barista coffees and an attractive light food and drink offer during the day.
Job Description

Job Purpose
To prepare fresh and high quality food for the members of the College, their guests and external customers within agreed timescales and budgets in a busy Department serving a range of venues across the main site. To lead and manage the kitchen, maintaining consistently high standards of food service in a food safe environment.

Principal Responsibilities

1. **Membership of the Catering and Hospitality Senior Management Team**
   As a member of the Departmental Senior Management Team, ensure that the appropriate culture, standards and operations are aligned across the different functions to deliver a high quality, cost-effective and safe food and beverage service to the College and guests.

2. **Menu Design and Creation/Culinary innovation**
   Actively engage with food trends and liaise with senior College stakeholders to develop imaginative menu options designed to enhance the customer experience whether for fine dining and events or daily Fellow’s, Hall and Buttery cafeteria meals. Maximising the use of fresh ingredients and remaining consistent with the College’s sustainability objectives at all times.

3. **Team Leadership and Management**
   Lead, develop, recruit, motivate and manage the kitchen team, building a collaborative, positive culture and ensuring capability is consistently enhanced through timely on and off the job training and regular performance review

4. **Management of the Food Cost Model**
   Develop the food cost model for the College and manage and control purchasing within agreed specifications and constraints both under the Cambridge Foodbuy agreement and from independent suppliers. Oversee the monitoring of stock and portion control as required.

5. **Lead and Manage Kitchen Operations**
   Develop and manage kitchen operational procedures and processes, ensuring effective, safe and efficient food preparation, presentation and service, staff rostering (including overtime), stock management and equipment maintenance. Lead your teams with your presence and participation in key College feasts and other high priority events (e.g. Alumni Dinners, May Ball)
6. **Food Safety and Hygiene**
Take responsibility for setting, communicating and maintaining Food Safety and Health and Safety standards for the whole Catering and Hospitality Department, organising training and, where required, manage audits to ensure any compliance issues are quickly resolved. Ensure that kitchen staff are well-trained and kitchen operations consistently meet and exceed food safety, health and safety and fire safety regulatory standards.

7. **Budgets and Reporting**
Manage the annual budget process for the kitchen, Monitor, review and implement financial and budgeting controls and service outcomes to ensure the relevant targets are met. Prepare regular reports on the Departmental performance, equipment maintenance and replacement schedules and present these to the College Catering and Hospitality Committee as required.

8. **Stakeholder Management and Communication**
Work with the key Committees and stakeholder groups in College and elsewhere in Cambridge to understand changing customer demands. Work with the other Catering Heads of Department in College to ensure that communication from the Department is clear and engaging and both attracts customers and alerts those with food allergies and other safety-related issues to risks in a timely way.

The list includes the principal accountabilities of the role but is not exhaustive other relevant duties may be specified by the Catering and Hospitality Manager from time to time.

**Resources Managed / Facts and Figures:**

These include:
- Manage approx. £1m food purchasing costs.
- Produce 800 meals daily, across the food service outlets.
- Manage £600,000 staff budget.
- Managing a team of 18 staff.
Person Specification

Qualifications, Knowledge and Experience:

- City & Guilds Catering skills qualification and management/leadership qualifications to NVQ Level 3 or equivalent on-the-job experience
- A proven leader with strong experience of kitchen leadership and management in a busy, diverse catering environment, working to tight deadlines across a range of hospitality offerings
- Up to date knowledge of trends in food and service, ideally with personal experience as a chef in a range of different environments that include fine dining, events and high turnover cafeteria menus.
- Experience of being part of a senior management team delivering high hospitality standards and innovation in a cost effective way
- Experience of leading Food Safety and Health and Safety management in a multi-outlet venue, preferably with a wide range of customer age-groups, allergies and nationalities dining. Food Safety Level 3 or above required.
- An understanding of and track record in the processes, practices and systems required to run an efficient and cost-effective kitchen operation
- Change management experience, with a strong track record in chef development at all levels and stages of their careers
- Good financial understanding with experience of preparing and delivering against budgets and of managing procurement of food and portion control

Terms and Conditions

Length of post: Permanent
Hours of work: 39.25 hours per week
Salary: Between £52,115.34 - £57,401.48 (this includes a market supplement) plus benefits
Location: The role is based St John’s College in Cambridge.
Contractual benefits include:

- Membership of a Defined Contribution Pension Scheme after a qualifying period
- Additional Christmas salary payment
- Annual leave of 36 working days (inclusive of Bank Holidays)

Other benefits include:

- Free meal in the College’s Buttery Dining Room (subject to a monetary limit) whilst on duty
- Access to a private healthcare scheme currently provided by BUPA
- Access to a ‘cash plan’ healthcare scheme currently provided by Simplyhealth which provides some financial assistance towards the cost of everyday health expenses such as sight tests or dental check-ups after a qualifying period
- Free car parking close to the College (subject to availability)
- Free use of an on-site Gym
- Free life cover

The appointment will be subject to an initial probationary period of nine months during which the appointment may be terminated by one months’ notice on either side. Following the successful completion of the probationary period, the period of notice is three months on either side.

Read more about the benefits of working at St John’s at https://www.joh.cam.ac.uk/vacancies. The appointment will be subject to an initial probationary period of six months during which the appointment may be terminated by one week’s notice on either side. Following the successful completion of the probationary period, the period of notice is one month on either side.
Recruitment Process

Please include in your application:

- A completed application form;
- A brief covering letter summarising why you believe yourself to be suitable for the role and why the role appeals to you;
- A full c.v.

Applications should be sent:

by email to: recruitment@joh.cam.ac.uk

or

by post to: HR Department, St John’s College, Cambridge, CB2 1TP

to arrive no later than 9.00 am on Monday 5 December 2022. Interviews are expected to take place during the week commencing 12 December 2022.

In applying for this role, you will provide personal data which the College will process in accordance with its data protection obligations and its Data Protection Policy. Please see attached for a copy of our Data Protection Statement for further information about how we process your personal data.