

R A B Y

Job Description Sous Chef

Job Title:	Sous Chef
Reports to:	Lead Chef (with collaboration alongside Estate Chef if required)
Department:	Leisure and Tourism
Location:	High Force Hotel & Waterfall
Hours:	40hrs - Permanent

Role Purpose

Raby is thriving, family-run estate under the stewardship of the Vane family, with a rich heritage and a forward-looking vision. Steeped in history, Raby Castle is surrounded by over 200 acres of beautiful parkland in County Durham, Raby has been home to generations of the Vane family and remains a vibrant destination offering tourism, hospitality, and events throughout the year.

In addition to Raby Castle and its grounds, the estate also includes High Force Waterfall, one of England's most spectacular natural attractions, and the High Force Hotel, which offers accommodation and dining in the heart of the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The estate comprises extensive landholdings across County Durham and Shropshire, with a focus on sustainable land management and stewardship of the countryside.

About the Role

The Sous Chef supports the Lead Chef in delivering food quality, compliance, and day-to-day kitchen operations. The role ensures standards are consistently maintained and that service runs smoothly, safely, and efficiently.

The Sous Chef acts as deputy to the Lead Chef, assuming responsibility for kitchen leadership during their absence and helping ensure the kitchen team operates to agreed principles, procedures, and expectations.

Our Kitchen Vision

High Force Hotel delivers traditional English cuisine in a distinctive heritage setting within Raby Estates. The kitchen culture prioritises:

- Consistency and quality in classic dishes
- Strong hygiene and food safety practices
- Team discipline and professionalism
- Guest-focused flexibility, including dietary and allergen needs
- A supportive environment that encourages development

The Sous Chef plays an important role in upholding these standards on a daily basis.

Key Tasks and Responsibilities

1. Food Quality & Service

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- Prepare and deliver food to agreed standards of quality, consistency, and presentation
- Support delivery of menus and daily specials as directed
- Maintain high standards of mise en place, section organisation, and service readiness
- Lead by example in pace, professionalism, and work ethic

2. Compliance, Hygiene & Safety

- Ensure the kitchen is maintained to a clean, safe, and hygienic standard
- Follow and support implementation of the site HACCP system
- Support accurate allergen management and ensure dietary requirements are followed correctly
- Operate safely at all times in accordance with risk assessments and safe systems of work
- Use chemicals strictly in line with manufacturer instructions and COSHH guidance

3. Stock Control & Cost Awareness

- Support stock rotation and storage standards
- Assist with stock control and organisation
- Help reduce wastage through careful preparation and portion control
- Contribute to maintaining cost awareness within daily operations

4. Team Support & Supervision

- Support the Lead Chef in supervising the kitchen team
- Provide guidance to junior staff during preparation and service
- Supervise the kitchen in the absence of the Lead Chef
- Ensure team members follow agreed standards, systems, and working practices

5. Operational Support

- Follow guidance and direction from the Lead Chef and General Manager
- Help ensure smooth coordination between kitchen and front-of-house teams
- Contribute to maintaining a positive and professional kitchen environment

Level of Responsibility

The Sous Chef is responsible for:

- Maintaining food and hygiene standards during their shift
- Supporting compliance and safe working practices
- Supervising junior staff when required
- Deputising for the Lead Chef in their absence

Overall departmental control, menu direction, and primary compliance accountability remain with the Lead Chef.

Key Performance Indicators - measured through 121's & PDR's

Success in this role will be reflected through:

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- Consistent food quality during service
- Maintenance of kitchen cleanliness and compliance
- Effective support of allergen and dietary procedures
- Reduction in avoidable waste
- Smooth service when deputising
- Positive teamwork and communication

Skills Required:

- Good understanding of food hygiene and HACCP principles
- Knowledge of allergen and dietary requirement procedures
- Ability to work independently and take responsibility during service
- Good organisational and teamwork skills
- Experience with traditional English cuisine is desirable

Key Requirements:

Qualifications:

- Food safety certificate in Food Hygiene (Preferred)

Knowledge/Experience:

- Experience working in a professional kitchen environment

Other:

How This Role Differs from the Lead Chef

While the Sous Chef supports supervision and can lead in the Lead Chef's absence, the role does not carry primary responsibility for overall kitchen management, ordering control, or menu direction. The Sous Chef focuses on operational execution and standards delivery, acting as a reliable deputy rather than the strategic lead.

Behavioural Expectations

The Sous Chef is expected to demonstrate:

- Reliability and strong work ethic
- Professional conduct and positive teamwork
- Attention to detail in preparation and presentation
- Calm and organised performance under pressure
- Willingness to learn and develop