

Cooking Instructor / Teacher

Heath Farm College, Maidstone

Job Title

Cooking Instructor / Teacher

Location

Heath Farm College, Maidstone

Reports To

Curriculum Lead / Head of Education

Hours

25.5 hours per week

3 days per week (Wednesday, Thursday and Friday)

Term Time Only

Salary

Dependent on experience and qualifications

About Heath Farm College

Heath Farm College is a specialist provision for young people aged 14-19 with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs. We are committed to providing engaging, personalised learning experiences that equip students with the knowledge, skills and confidence they need for adulthood, employment and independent living.

We believe that practical, hands-on learning can be transformative for our students. Our vocational curriculum develops not only qualifications, but also confidence, resilience, independence and essential life skills.

Purpose of the Role

We are seeking an enthusiastic and adaptable Cooking Instructor / Teacher to deliver engaging vocational cooking and food preparation programmes to small groups of students aged 14-19 with SEMH needs.

The successful candidate will deliver a range of cooking qualifications and accredited courses, while also providing practical life skills interventions tailored to the needs of individual students. The role offers an opportunity to make a significant difference to young people's lives by helping them develop independence, healthy living skills, confidence and employability.

The successful applicant may come from an educational, catering, hospitality or food industry background. Previous experience in a school or college setting is desirable but not essential.

Key Responsibilities

Teaching and Learning

- Plan and deliver engaging cooking and food preparation lessons.
- Deliver vocational qualifications and accredited programmes in cooking and food preparation.
- Adapt learning activities to meet the individual needs, interests and abilities of students.
- Create an inclusive and supportive learning environment that enables all students to achieve success.
- Promote enjoyment of cooking, healthy lifestyles and positive food choices.
- Assess and monitor student progress and maintain accurate records of achievement.

Vocational Curriculum Delivery

Depending on qualifications and experience, programmes may include:

- Practical Cooking Skills
- Food Preparation and Nutrition
- Healthy Eating
- Introduction to Catering and Hospitality
- Food Hygiene and Safety
- Baking and Patisserie Skills
- Kitchen Organisation and Management
- Menu Planning
- Budgeting and Shopping Skills
- Independent Living Skills
- Employability Skills within the Catering Industry
- Accredited Qualifications up to Level 2

Life Skills and Independence Interventions

A key element of the role is supporting students to develop essential life skills through practical learning opportunities, including:

- Planning and preparing balanced meals
- Shopping and budgeting
- Understanding food labels and nutrition
- Healthy eating and wellbeing
- Cooking on a budget
- Kitchen safety and hygiene
- Meal preparation for independent living
- Household management skills
- Building confidence and self-care skills
- Developing social and communication skills through collaborative cooking activities

Programmes will be tailored to individual Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), personal development targets and future aspirations.

Supporting Students

- Build positive, professional relationships with students.
- Support young people with SEMH needs to engage successfully in learning.
- Use positive behaviour support strategies and trauma-informed approaches.
- Encourage independence, resilience, self-esteem and personal responsibility.
- Work collaboratively with teaching, pastoral and therapeutic teams.
- Act as a positive role model for students.

Quality and Compliance

- Ensure all food preparation activities comply with food hygiene and health and safety requirements.
- Maintain a safe and organised teaching kitchen.
- Carry out risk assessments where appropriate.
- Maintain equipment and resources to a high standard.
- Participate in quality assurance and curriculum development activities.
- Follow safeguarding policies and procedures at all times.

Person Specification

Essential Criteria

Qualifications

- Level 3 qualification or above in Professional Cookery, Catering, Hospitality, Food Preparation, Nutrition or a related subject.

Knowledge and Skills

- Strong practical cooking and food preparation skills.

- Ability to engage and motivate young people through practical learning.
- Good communication and interpersonal skills.
- Knowledge of food hygiene and kitchen safety requirements.
- Ability to differentiate learning and adapt teaching approaches.
- Strong organisational and planning skills.

Personal Qualities

- Patient, resilient and adaptable.
- Positive and solution-focused.
- Enthusiastic about supporting young people to succeed.
- Committed to inclusion and student wellbeing.
- Passionate about promoting independence and life skills.

Desirable Criteria

- Teaching qualification (PGCE, Cert Ed, AET, PTLLS, DTLLS or equivalent).
- Assessor qualification (TAQA, A1, D32/33 or equivalent).
- Food Hygiene Certificate.
- Experience delivering vocational qualifications.
- Previous experience within catering, hospitality or food service industries.
- Experience supporting young people aged 14-19.
- Experience working with SEMH students or learners with additional needs.
- Understanding of trauma-informed practice and restorative approaches.

What We Offer

- The opportunity to make a genuine difference to young people's lives.
- Small class sizes and high levels of individual support.
- A supportive and collaborative staff team.
- Opportunities for professional development and training.
- The opportunity to shape and develop an exciting vocational and life skills curriculum.
- A rewarding role where students can experience success through practical learning.

Safeguarding Statement

Heath Farm College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. All successful applicants will be subject to an enhanced DBS check, satisfactory references and all relevant pre-employment checks in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance.

We welcome applications from qualified teachers, tutors, chefs, caterers and hospitality professionals who are passionate about equipping young people with the skills they need for life, learning and future employment.