

Role Description

The main focus of this role is the planning, organisation and smooth running of all operations within the catering activities of the Zoo from daily visitor lunch service to the planning and execution of larger scale weddings and corporate event catering.

Position: Permanent

Hours: Full-time, 5 days per week (37.5 hours)

Days are allocated on a rota system. Note the zoo opens 7 days a week (10am – 4pm), with occasional evening events.

Annual Leave: 22 days plus bank holidays

Reporting to: Head of Operations

Main Tasks

- Lead and manage all aspects of the food and beverage service in the restaurant and the catering outlet.
- Line manage the Food and Beverage Supervisors – Kitchen and Restaurant, including ensuring they have the appropriate training and resources, and hold regular meetings and annual appraisals.
- Line manage and task some of the Catering, Retail and Events assistants, whilst working closely with the Head of Operations, Visitor Operations Manager and the Events Manager to ensure staff are appropriately tasked and trained to be able to cover all activities across the department, and that outstanding customer service is always delivered.
- Be responsible for the daily pre-opening set up, through lunch service and during daily close down procedures, and oversee that the due diligence records are being completed.
- Be responsible for maintaining our 5* EHO rating by ensuring that an excellent level of food hygiene is kept and that all due diligence and cleaning is carried out daily and recorded.
- Develop and plan seasonal catering offerings that suit a busy and fast paced customer environment yet also adapting to an off-season lower visitor number.
- Work with the Events Manager to plan and create detailed Wedding Breakfast menus, to suit the Wedding couple's needs, that are achievable with the resources available.
- Prepare, plan and lead your team through busy large event or wedding day service. Ensuring that your team are well prepared, focused, and that quality and delivery is of a high standard.
- Develop buffet menus and additional catering offerings for Corporate away days, private parties and other functions that support and promote additional event income.
- Oversee monthly stock takes and monitor spend to coincide with profitable margin on sales.
- Control stock levels to keep food waste to a minimum.

- Oversee the catering training and development of staff within the team. Ensure that outstanding customer service is always delivered.
- Oversee the preparation and reconciliation of cash tills for daily operations.
- Work with the Head of Operations and to prepare monthly reports on catering progress and make recommendations for improved practice where possible.
- Develop and maintain a network of approved suppliers for catering, ensuring that they fit within the Zoo ethical principles.
- Collaborate with other Zoo departments to ensure exemplary customer service whilst adhering to policies and procedures.
- Research similar organisations to maintain knowledge of current industry trends for retail and catering.
- Step in to support the rest of the operations team in case of sickness or break cover.
- Undertake any other tasks that may be required from time-to-time as may be consistent with the nature and scope of the post.

Employment criteria

Our ideal candidate will:

- Have experience of working within a catering industry at management level.
- Must be able to demonstrate previous experience of managing departmental budgets of at least £250k per annum.
- As a minimum hold a culinary or food production qualification at NVQ Level 3 or equivalent experience.
- Have knowledge and experience of developing and costing menus suitable for daily attraction menus to bespoke corporate and private clients including weddings.
- Have good leadership skills and demonstrable line management experience.
- Have excellent time management, the ability to prioritise a busy workload and be calm under pressure.
- Possess excellent interpersonal skills to build close working relationships with customers, colleagues, suppliers and other stakeholders.
- Hold an immediate or above Food Hygiene Certificate.
- Demonstrate good computer literacy and a proficient working knowledge of Microsoft Office 365 and epos systems.
- Have experience of cash handling and till reconciliations.
- Be able to work flexible hours including evenings, weekends and holidays.

It would also help if you:

- Hold a first aid qualification.
- Have experience of working in a busy tourism setting or as part of an organisation with strong ethical focus, charity connection or educational elements.